

Potential Threats to Critical Infrastructure and Key Facilities

The recent power failure and the subsequent blackout, affecting a large part of the United States and Canada, demonstrated to everyone that the critical infrastructures and key facilities in the United States and Canada are interdependent. In addition, it showed everyone not only the interconnectivity of these systems, but also the extent or ripple effects that can occur after any one part or piece of this infrastructure is damaged.

Some experts testifying before a recent House Homeland Security Subcommittee meeting said that they are uncertain of what ripple effects could occur should other parts of the Nation's critical infrastructure fail due to terrorist attack. However, FBI Executive Assistant Director Larry Mefford told the Cybersecurity, Science, and Research and Development Subcommittee that, "the structure of private and government entities acting in coordination will provide an effective response in the unfortunate event an attack occurs." Other experts did not share the Assistant Director's opinion and they indicated that the information that the government needs to achieve such wide-scale coordination and interaction between private and government entities is not currently available.

For the full story as reported by Teri Rucker with National Journal's Technology Daily see link at: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0903/090403td2.htm>